

To: Rhode Island Renewable Energy Fund Advisory Board *(Draft)*
From: Nancy Selman
Date: November 28, 2005
Re: Meeting Minutes for November 8, 2005

Next meeting dates: Second Tuesday of every month. For 2005: 12/13.

In attendance: See attached Attendance List.

1. Minutes and Update
 - a. Minutes-
 - i. typographical error in first line of 5.a.
 - ii. Change deadlines for Outreach and Education RFP.
 - b. Update – ask for updates from contractors and grantees earlier in order to have them by the meeting date.
2. Ponagansett Biomass Presentation – Rick Sparks from the Foster Schools buildings subcommittee is looking for funding for 25% (\$357,812) of the total cost (\$1,431,250) of a new biomass-fired boiler for a comprehensive building project in Ponagansett which encompasses a new Middle School and renovations to the High School. The boiler would serve the entire campus' hydronic heating system and would use green wood chips from local wood products industry, utility tree-trimming and forest clearing. Since the proposed Project does not produce electricity, it is not eligible at this time for a grant from the Fund. The following possible courses of action were discussed:
 - a. A letter to the legislature to change the enabling legislation to allow the Fund to support non-electricity producing renewable energy, such as biomass for heating.
 - b. Designating the Ponagansett School Biomass Project an Outreach and Education demonstration project and funding under the Outreach and Education program. This option seemed logical due to the fact the Project is located at a school, but does not get around the fact that it does not produce electricity.
 - c. Modify the Project to include the production of electricity. This will prove difficult as at this scale, a steam turbine is not feasible and biomass gasification technology is not attained commercial status due to gas clean up issues (the biogas is not suitable for gas turbines or reciprocating engines.)
 - d. Utilize the DSM fund for the Project because it displaces electric heat at the high school. This type of application has not been funded yet by the DSM fund so it is unknown whether it would be considered eligible. If not, would require a change in the DSM fund mandate at the legislative or PUC level.
 - e. Approach ESCOs active in State buildings to fund the system.
 - f. Utilize the State Energy Office revolving loan fund to finance the boiler.
3. Biomass Gasification Demonstration Project – Tim Maker presented a regional biomass gasification project which is seeking funding for completion. The Project is currently in the process of selecting gasifier technology from a shortlist of four technologies identified in a competitive process. The technologies are from around the world: Finland, Denmark, India and New Zealand. Tim Maker is seeking \$200,000 of the \$2,000,000 required to build the demonstration project from RI.
4. Solar Programs:
 - a. Open Program List of Applicants– the list of applicants is being updated to identify attrition (projects which no longer require funding because the applicant has changed his mind.)
 - b. Program Design –
 - i. Residential and Small Commercial:
 1. Proposed Incentives:

- a. 2000 watts and less: \$3.50 per watt
- b. 2000 watts to 6000 watts: \$3.00 per watt.
- c. Size limit: Funding only up to 6000 watts. Any size system will be considered but only up to 6000 watts (regardless of total system size) will be funded.
- d. It was noted by Chris Warfel that this approach of lowering incentives does not develop a long term market because it favors established installer(s) over new entrants whose costs may be higher.

ii. Commercial:

- 1. The Fund will solicit proposals over a two-month period to be made in the same format as the Open Program application. The proposals will be funded in a competitive process according to the amount requested as a discount to the following proposed incentive levels:
 - a. Commercial and Industrial (for profit) - \$3.00 per watt
 - b. Non Profit - \$4.00 per watt.
- 2. Similar proposals (on a \$/watt basis) will be awarded on a first come-first served basis.
- 3. There will be a 15 kW size limit for funding purposes, similar (in structure) to the 6 kW size limit for the Open program.

A quorum was not available for a vote at the end of the meeting. It was requested that this program design be explained in an email and voted on, but subsequent to the meeting it was decided that this is in violation of open meeting rules. A vote will be taken at the December 13, 2005 meeting.

- 5. New Green Power Programs – A draft RFI was circulated in the November Board package. Bob Grace requested that comments be provided to him.

Decisions:

- 1. No decisions were made by the Board.

Actions:

- 1. The SEO, individual Advisory Board members, and consultants will assist the Foster School Board building subcommittee where feasible and appropriate in accessing funding for the biomass-fired boiler.
- 2. The Board will vote to approve the Solar Program design in the December 2005 meeting.

Attendance:

Nancy Selman
 Erich Stephens
 Lefteris Pavlides
 William Lueker
 Vin Rose
 Janice McClanaghan
 John Baxter
 Julie Capobianco
 Christopher Warfel
 David Jacobson
 Charles Hawkins
 Pat Condon
 Peter Osterhort

Richard Sparks
Tim Maker
Bruce Payton
Rob Rizzo
Bob Grace
Jeremy Alper
Michael Hill